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By DM/LN, NARA, Date 4/16/15MEMORANDUM

June 7, 1971

TO: ARA - Mr. Charles A. Meyer  
ARA - Mr. John H. Crimmins

FROM: ARA/BR - Robert W. Dean

SUBJECT: Brazilian National War College Visit

The group is led by 60-year-old four-star general, Rodrigo Octavio Jordao Ramos, one of the more outspoken nationalists in the Brazilian Army's hierarchy. He is very conscious of ceremonial precedence and tends to be overbearing and abrasive. He has a passion bordering on mania for the Amazon (because he believes it is already coveted by other nations as a refuge from atomic war or as space for excess population) and advocates the creation of a Federal Government Ministry for Amazon Affairs and of a Fifth Army to supplant in that area what is now the 8th Military Region of the Fourth Army (Rodrigo Octavio commanded the 8th Military Region from July 69 to January 1970).

Because he supported the Albuquerque Lima faction (more nationalistic and statist) in the Army during and after the 1969 presidential succession crisis, Rodrigo Octavio is out of favor with President Medici and Army Minister Geisel. His assignment as Commandant of the Superior War College has deprived him of a seat and a vote in the Army's High Command; i.e., he has been removed from the main stream. Nevertheless, he now has a good forum in which to expound on his views of Brazilian development. Interestingly, his latest public speech (March) called for a rapid return to the rule of law in Brazil, a theme somewhat out of touch with current views of the GOB which hold that exceptional powers may be required for some time. Also of interest is that, even though the main topic of that speech was the Amazon and its development, he did not once mention the Medici Government's pet project, the Trans-Amazon Highway.

General Rodrigo Octavio is considered basically pro-U.S. (he has stated that Brazil's interests can be advanced most effectively through close relations with the United States) and he is said to retain fond memories of two years spent at Fort Belvoir as an engineering student in 1946-47 (where he was also an instructor in a course for Brazilian officers). He speaks fair English.

Ambassador Rountree has requested that in this year's briefing sessions particular stress be placed on our views regarding the law of the sea.

ARA/BR:MJGlavis:me:6/7/71 Clearance: ARA/BR - Mr. Ravndal